

Message Text

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ACTION OPR-02

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
THE WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1406

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 2055

USIA FOR IOP/G PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE AND ILA

E.O. 11652: GDS
SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: PRESS ROOM SITE

REF: CARACAS 1858-C

1. USIS CARACAS EXPLORING EVERY POSSIBLE LOCATION FOR PRESS ROOM
SITE FOR PRESIDENTIAL VISIT. THEY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. ANAUCO HILTON, WHERE 140 NEWSMEN WILL BE HOUSED, HAS
PAIR OF ADJOINING ROOMS, EACH MEASURING 15 BY 6 METERS, BUT
WITH NO AVAILABLE NEARBY OFFICE SPACE.

B. TAMANACO HOTEL, HOUSING 110 NEWSMEN AND LOCATED TWENTY
MINUTES FROM ANAUCO HILTON BY CAR, WHEN TRAFFIC IS AT LOW EBB,
HAS ONE ROOM MEASURING 807 SQUARE FEET AND WITH NO NEARBY OFFICE
SPACE. THIS SITE WOULD PROVIDE A CLEARLY INADEQUATE PRESS ROOM.

C. THIRD POSSIBILITY, ALTHOUGH AVAILABILITY NOT YET
CONFIRMED, IS IN BUILDING ADJOINING ANAUCO HILTON. ALTHOUGH
ROUTE IS SHORT, IT IS CONFUSING, TRAVERSING ELEVATOR, VARIOUS
COORIDORS AND OPEN SHOPPING AREA TO REACH TWO ROOMS ADEQUATE
FOR PRESS AND WITH ENOUGH SPACE EACH FOR OFFICES FOR WHITE HOUSE
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PRESS STAFF AND USIS STAFF.

2. IN ALL THREE CASES USG WOULD HAVE TO PAY ROOM RENTAL AND
INSTALLATION ALL EQUIPMENT INCLUDING TELEX, TELEPHONES, TABLES,
CHAIRS, TYPEWRITERS, COPYING MACHINES, ETC. INFORMATION
MINISTRY WILL PAY NO REPEAT NO COSTS AT ANY OF ABOVE LOCATIONS.
IN ANY CASE, TRAFFIC AND DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO HOTELS WOULD

MEAN THAT ABOUT HALF OF NEWSMEN WOULD HAVE TO SPEND AT LEAST TWENTY MINUTES EACH WAY TO AND FROM THEIR HOTEL TO PRESS ROOM. REPRESENTATIVE OF MAJOR US COMMUNICATIONS CARRIER HERE SAYS COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES AT ANY OF THESE LOCATIONS WOULD BE MINIMAL.

3. FOURTH POSSIBILITY IS ONE AGREED TO WHEN PRE-ADVANCE VISITED CARACAS IN 1977: GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND OPERATED TV CHANNEL 8. IT WOULD GIVE US FOUR LARGE STUDIOS LOCATED WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF LA CASONA WHERE PRESIDENT AND MRS CARTER WILL SPEND MOST OF THEIR TIME IN CARACAS. VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT WILL INSTALL AND PAY FOR ALL FACILITIES FOR PRESS ROOMS AT CHANNEL 8, INCLUDING 30 INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONES (HALF FOR DIRECT DIALING AND HALF FOR CREDIT CARD CALLS), 10 LOCAL PHONES, SPECIAL PHONES FOR WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE, ARINGDOWN PHONE BETWEEN EMBASSY AND USIS OFFICE, 20 TELEX, 30 TAPE PERFORATORS AND 15 OPERATORS ON TAP ALL THE TIME; ALL TABLES AND CHAIRS, TYPEWRITERS, COPYING MACHINES, LOUNGING FURNITURE, LARGE SCREEN TV MONITORS FOR NEWSMEN TO SEE AND HEAR IN ENGLISH FULL LIVE COVERAGE (WITH SPECIAL SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION) OF ALL EVENTS; AND SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE. CHANNEL 8 LOCATED ABOUT TEN-MINUTE CAR RIDE FROM HOTELS. THERE WOULD BE NO REPEAT NO COST TO USG FOR EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES OUTLINED ABOVE IF CHANNEL 8 USED AS PRESS CENTER.

4. REGARDLESS OF PRESS ROOM LOCATION, TELEVISION NEWSMEN
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WILL HAVE TO DO THEIR EDITING AT CHANNEL 8 FACILITIES, FILE THEIR REPORTS VIA SATELLITE FROM THERE AND WILL DEPEND UPON CHANNEL 8'S FULL IN-HOUSE COVERAGE FOR MOST OF THEIR MATERIAL.

5. CHARGE, PAO, AND OTHER SENIOR EMBASSY OFFICERS INVOLVED STRONGLY RECOMMEND USE OF CHANNEL 8 AS BEST AVAILABLE PRESS ROOM FACILITY.

6. FORWARDING PLANNING AND ACTUAL PINNING DOWN OF REQUIREMNT, TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS LINES AND PERSONNEL MUST BE DONE NOW, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE OF COMPLETE HIATUS OF HOLY WEEK AND NEED TO KEEP VENEZUELAN OFFICIALS ATTENTION FOCUSSED ON THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. THEY ARE ALSO INVOLVED IN VISIT OF PRINCE CHARLES DURING THIRD WEEK OF MARCH. WILL APPRECIATE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DECISION ON PRESS ROOM LOCATION.

KEY

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